



Meeting Minutes

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB, Board)
Public Involvement and Communications Committee (PIC)**

December 14, 2021

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

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<p><i>This is only a summary of issues and actions discussed at this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of represented ideas or opinions, and it should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.</i></p>

Opening

Ruth Nicholson, HAB Facilitator, welcomed meeting participants and notified the participants that the meeting was being recorded.

Stan Branch, US Department of Energy (DOE), announced that this meeting was being held in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. He stated that the HAB's role was to provide policy-level advice and recommendations regarding DOE Environmental Management (DOE-EM) site-specific issues.

Jeff Burrigh, Oregon Department of Energy and PIC Chair, introduced himself. He explained that the goal of the day's meeting was to discuss public involvement and thanked attendants for taking the time to join. He reviewed the meeting agenda and explained that round robins served as an opportunity for members to get to know one another and to get an idea of what other members think about a given topic.

Committee Overview for New HAB Members

Jeff Burrigh presented an overview of the PIC for the benefit of new HAB members. He went over the name of the committee—Public Involvement and Communications Committee—and explained that it was in place to further the defined HAB values. He pointed out one of those values in particular: involve the public. He noted that the definition of that value, along with all other HAB values, could be reviewed online (https://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/HAB_ValuesWhitePaper_Attach.pdf).

Jeff stated that the purpose of the PIC is to advise the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies on public involvement efforts. Those might include meeting design; outreach and notification activities; or other public engagement opportunities. He explained that a topic that was recently reinvigorated is environmental justice and how it applies to Hanford Site cleanup efforts. He stated that, were there any changes to public involvement plans at a high level, the PIC would be involved. He stated that the PIC likes to have “boots on ground” involvement, which might include reviewing surveys, fact sheets, or similar items as a test audience.

Jeff stated that the core ideas of accessibility and public involvement remain constant but need to adapt to advancements in time and technology. The ultimate goal is to have a meaningfully involved public. He used a metaphor of a gazebo to describe the PIC's role. He hoped for the PIC to serve as a “gathering place,” while also helping the TPA agencies to create such spaces. Jeff reviewed some of the past HAB advice that either started within PIC or that PIC contributed to. Steve Anderson, Grant and Franklin Counties, stated that an important element of the PIC's efforts is education.

Jeff explained that, as a short summary, should an idea of interest to members be raised in committee discussions, the committee could establish an Issue Manager (IM) team to organize ideas, provide an overview of what they felt to be important, and develop a potential advice draft for later review by the committee. The committee could then refine the draft and potentially pass that draft from committee to the full Board for discussion, review, editing, and eventual consensus. He stated that he expected the HAB member orientation, to take place later that same day, would go over committee processes in greater detail.

Liz Mattson, Hanford Challenge, stated that the PIC had a role in “reenergizing” not only its members, but the agencies, to encourage new ideas in engaging the public. She stated that there was always room for new ideas and for new members to share ideas. She recounted a previous experience with stifling public conversations where new options were explored and implemented successfully.

Agency Updates

David Bowen, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), thanked the meeting attendants for taking the time to participate in the meetings and on the Board, stating that it was an important role. Ryan Miller, Ecology, noted that he recently started as Communications Manager for Ecology. He stated that, should HAB members have any questions that they should feel free to reach out to him.

Roberto Armijo, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), congratulated Ryan and introduced himself as an EPA project manager serving as the de facto public involvement interface for EPA. He stated that, regarding agency updates, there was little to report from EPA.

Stan Branch and Gary Younger, DOE, introduced themselves. Gary stated that there was nothing to announce from DOE but was glad to the Board members were present to discuss the Hanford Site's challenges.

Meeting Minute Approval

The committee moved to adopt the May and September 2021 meeting minutes.

Round Robin Discussion

Jeff introduced the round robin discussion topic: What is your #1 idea that could increase participation in public meetings right now?

Jeff stated that, for the day's round robin, discussion would start with PIC members, then move to other meeting participants. Anyone that did not wish to participate in the discussion was free to pass on the opportunity.

Shelley Cimon, Columbia Riverkeeper, stated that the most important thing for the site was getting the Direct-Feed Low-Activity Waste facility online. She felt that the PIC might need to think about designing public involvement events to talk about it, potentially for the year 2022. An event could discuss the project from startup to operations and how unique the facility was. It could go over goals, efforts to date, challenges, solutions, and accomplishments—the realities of building a one-of-a-kind facility in COVID times. She hoped for the public to start thinking about the facility starting up.

Dan Solitz, Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board, stated that, as the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) had since been demolished to slab-on-grade, it might be time to start asking the public how it would like the site to be remembered. He suggested that it may be time to ask for funds for some sort of remembrance project, such as art.

Dan Strom, Benton-Franklin Health District, stated that he had been on the Board for a year and possessed a background in radiation protection. He noted comments that there had been many deaths resulting from COVID-19. He wondered how many of those might have caught COVID-19 while working at the Hanford Site. Considering that much of the Hanford Site discussion focused on preventing future illness or death from contamination, the Site should be doing everything possible that could be done presently regarding safety, including getting workers both vaccinations against COVID-19 and subsequent booster shots, and getting rid of workers that were not willing to protect others by refusing vaccination.

Dana Miller, Yakama Nation, and Erin Braich, Benton Franklin Council of Governments, introduced themselves and passed on the opportunity to speak on the round robin topic.

Esteban Ortiz, Greenlatinos, introduced himself. He was glad to see members of the Yakama Nation participating in the meeting. He felt like the native communities' knowledge and history of the land should be respected. He stated that new generations were also concerned for the climate and the lands and hopes to see cleanup progress going forward.

Gerry Pollet, Heart of America Northwest, stated that he had a few things to share from Heart of America Northwest. He stated that the TPA and HAB needed to design an ongoing and meaningful dialogue that truly reshapes strategic plans for Hanford Site cleanup. He felt that nothing was more important for public involvement than the strategic plans—the guiding documents. He stated that those were the closest to the public, the easiest for the public to understand, and the easiest for the public to weigh in on. He felt that the public should feel like its input was effective, providing input on what the top priorities were and where, when, and how those would be addressed. Without a feeling of efficacy, public support would cease, and funding would dry up. Gerry felt that recent strategic planning and public involvement had been “a joke.” As an example, he stated that the Hanford 5-Year Plan was not a plan at all, it was a graphic described as a placemat.

Gerry stated that Heart of America Northwest invested in an extensive outreach effort to generate comments on the Hanford 5-Year Plan to measure the effectiveness of public outreach. He stated that the Hanford TPA mailing list was down to approximately 1,000 people, most of whom likely consisted of contractors and agency employees. His organization saw greater interest in minor cleanup projects across the state, while Hanford was one of the largest and most funded cleanup efforts nationwide. He felt that it could and should have greater interest among the public. Heart of America Northwest created a citizen's guide that Ecology reviewed and was distributed to the public with only a week remaining in the comment period, along with a request to comment on the 5-Year Plan. Their efforts resulted 386 comments in that one-week span.

Gerry hoped to learn what the DOE's next steps would be in relation to the comments received on the 5-Year Plan. He also asked if EPA or Ecology received those comments, and if so, if there were any plans to address those comments separately from DOE. He concluded that topic stating that it was up to the HAB, and specifically the PIC, to take on and lead development of a regional outreach and input program. Ryan Miller stated that Ecology did not have the comments, as that comment period was held by DOE specifically, but he would ask for them. He clarified that Ecology's combined mailing list was closer to a figure of 2,400 people.

Additionally, Gerry stated that the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report on supplemental waste treatment that concluded that offsite disposal could accelerate cleanup by decades. He hoped to examine that topic from a public involvement perspective. He felt that Ecology's response to the report was consistent with a pattern of inaction from the agency, referring specifically to the lack of action on the B-109 single-shell tank (SST) leak. He stated that B-109 was a huge concern to the public and that there was not a single public involvement or educational effort about the leak by any of the agencies. He stated that Ecology had special responsibility on that matter, as did EPA as it was a leak from a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) unit. Heart of America Northwest had no intention of letting the one-year anniversary of the leak come and go without legal action occurring. He felt that a decision needed to be made, as SSTs could continue to leak into the ground, and supplemental waste treatment could mitigate the issue. He hoped to see a major public involvement effort from the agencies going forward and that legal action could be expected if the agencies were not responsive.

Emmitt Jackson, Non-Union, Non-Management Employees, felt that, in order to be inclusive while increasing public participation, it would be important to go where the groups the HAB or TPA agencies wanted to include are. As an example, African Americans held a town hall meeting at one of the local churches. If the goal was to capture interest among ethnic groups, such places would be a starting point.

Liz Mattson suggested that recording of virtual meetings might inhibit open conversation during those meetings, as some individuals might be more reserved in what they are willing to say as a result. She was not certain of that effect but thought it might be a worthwhile experiment to see if non-recorded meetings might be beneficial to open discussion. She noted that she personally liked the recordings because they allowed her to review and learn more from the discussions. She thought that it would be best if educational meetings were still recorded, but back-and-forth discussions may not need to be.

Tom Sicilia, Oregon Department of Energy, thought that it was important for those holding virtual meetings to “tell the whole story.” This might include who is holding the meeting and why, how the meeting topic fit into the bigger picture of the Hanford Site, and how comments might potential change actions taken. Similarly, what was available to be changed and what was not. He stated that he understood that it was difficult to change course on large projects but did not want to see comment periods just held out of requirement or formality.

Tom Sicilia stated that, with the expectation that virtual or public meetings being “here to stay,” he thought that evening meetings should be held rather than daytime meetings to accommodate people’s schedules. Additionally, agencies and the HAB should be searching for space that would be big enough for people to meet and social distance in order to hold in-person meetings when that became a possibility.

Steve Anderson agreed with Tom Sicilia’s initial point, stating that related to the educational process. Meetings needed to be clear as to how they were important and what they might influence.

Steve Wiegman, Public at Large, noted that public involvement was always a challenging issue. He felt that the real challenge in that, at the time, was that people were distracted by life in general, which made it difficult to reach out and interest them in Hanford-related topics. From a historical perspective, he recalled people used to go to malls to engage the public in person on Hanford topics, using visual aids such as charts and diagrams and engaging in open conversation. He felt that the informality helped spark conversation and interest. He thought that the formality of HAB meetings could be intimidating to the public and hoped to revisit things that were previously proven to work.

Tom Galioto, Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC), stated that he interpreted the round robin topic to be related to public meetings overall. He felt that the timing of the meetings needed to be favorable to the general public being able to attend, as the times and durations did not typically facilitate that. He noted that there are represented organizations within the HAB had been able to quickly mobilize to engage the public effectively and thought that the HAB should be able to tap into that capability, stating that there was much to be learned from organizations such as Heart of America Northwest in generating interest among the public. Finally, he stated that interest is generated effectively where there was a personal connection to a topic. He thought that dry Listserv notices and newspaper announcements were necessary and required, but not sufficient to generate interest.

Esteban stated that he felt that language access was a significant factor in interest. He also noted that he worked with public organizations on the west side of Washington, where he found that people benefited from meetings on clear, specific subject that “get to the point” to facilitate their schedules. Roberto Armijo thanked Esteban for his comments, noting that he was also going to touch on language access. Roberto noted that he recently attended training on public participation, which provided some background

on the types of activities to focus on and how EPA should gear its public meetings. He hoped to work with the PIC on that subject in the future.

Shelley recalled a previous event where she spoke about Hanford at a high school. Discussion of jobs resonated with the students, such as what types of jobs might be available and what education was needed. She was also interested in the empathy displayed by the students; when learning that bomb material was developed on site, the students apologized to Japanese exchange students that were present.

Jeff believed that to engage the public, topics needed a “hook,” or a means to connect with a person to show why it matters. He did not feel that a permit modification discussion would achieve that. Instead, something that might grab a person’s attention would be something that is permanent or with an important name, such as high-level waste rules. Or, as a generalization, the scale of an issue discussed. He also considered options, such as online forums, for the public to engage in discussions in the future, as not all potentially interest members of the public can meet at designated times. He stated that, to engage people, you need to go where they are, as they cannot be expected to come to you. Additionally, the public needs to know that a topic has weight. Finally, he thought opportunities for the public to have face-to-face discussions and the ability to ask questions of subject matter experts were particularly valuable. He hoped to see engagement efforts expand beyond all-day meetings. He wondered if the PIC meetings were too cumbersome as they were and asked for input.

Miya Burke, Hanford Challenge, noted that she has attended public meetings where she felt like the presenters were just “checking a box” and trying to get through it as quickly as possible. She stated that those meetings did not use plain language, were highly technical, and were clear that they were not designed with the public in mind. She felt that each public meeting should be designed with the opportunity to get the public engaged on a topic and interest them in coming back for more. This puts the onus on the presenter, she stated.

Emmitt noted that the discussion made him think back to his career in education and outreach. He typically had a captive audience, but Hanford public outreach efforts would not likely have that. He considered ideas that would provide the opportunity to talk to people and capitalize on captive audiences, such as a booth at events such as basketball tournaments or Cinco De Mayo events.

In conclusion, Jeff stated that the round robin topic seemed like something that should be checked on regularly. He stated that public outreach is a difficult job, with a lot of effort put forth on just the off-chance of finding someone interested. He expressed appreciation for those at the TPA agencies and others working to advance that effort.

TPA Public Involvement Calendar

Ruth Nicholson provided a short walkthrough on how to find the TPA public involvement events calendar online. It can be found at: <https://www.hanford.gov/pageaction.cfm/calendar>

Dana Cowley, Hanford Mission Integration Solutions (HMIS), provided the calendar overview. She stated that her team was passionate about what they could do to get people engaged. She noted that her team preferred to go above and beyond what was required; in addition to the required meetings, they would issue notices and content to the media, including the *Tri-City Herald* and *Tri-City Journal of Business*, as well as social media. She stated that she would appreciate it if HAB members would share those social media posts.

In the calendar, she noted some new items added since the prior PIC meeting, including:

- A 60-day comment period for the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) Chapter 6A Inspection Plan Class 2 Permit Modification

- A DOE 60-day comment period for the Liquid Effluent Retention Facility (LERF) and Effluent Treatment Facility (ETF) Class 2 Permit Modification
- DOE 90-day comment period on the Draft Waste Incidental to Reprocessing (WIR) Evaluation for the Test Bed Initiative (TBI)

Daina McFadden, Ecology, contributed with the overview, noting Ecology's 30-day comment period on the State Waste Discharge Permit ST4502 renewal. She also noted that there would be upcoming construction efforts but had nothing additional to share at that time.

Committee Discussion

Steve Wiegman recalled a previous discussion about agency response to comments, noting HAB interest in understanding how comments were utilized. Dana explained that after the end of a comment period, a response to comment document was generated. Those would be available in the Administrative Record, and she would be able to bring those to the HAB to review in the future. Before a permit is finalized, each comment is responded to and posted in those documents; she stated that every time someone takes the time to submit a comment, it is seriously considered and responded to.

Daina contributed, stating that for Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) comment periods, Ecology takes those comments to permit leads and works with DOE to determine the best responses to those comments. Those are posted for public review, and when there is a contact address available, Ecology follows up and lets the commenters know those have been posted, though many choose to comment anonymously.

Tom Sicilia noted that the Administrative Record can be daunting and offered to walk people through it, if interested. He noted that some comment periods go above and beyond the legal requirements, such as the Hanford 5-Year Plan. He asked if there would be a response to comments for that. Daina stated that she did not know and would need to investigate.

Liz noticed that in a response to a piece of HAB advice, there was reference to a 5-year review to the TPA and asked if Daina could discuss that. She was concerned about the potential opportunity to update the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters* document. Dana was unsure and interpreted the wording in the advice to be referring to the CERCLA 5-Year Review, but would confirm either way.

Steve Wiegman noted that, if the HAB had a better understanding of how public input was utilized, it would provide better context for public outreach efforts.

Liz noted that sometimes the turnaround time was particularly long, with comments sometimes not being released for a full year. She felt that the public attention did not last that long. She noted that her organization, Hanford Challenge, tries to help with that, reviewing comments versus changes made in permits and documents to try and understand if or how they were utilized. She hoped that the TPA agencies would reach out to the public before decisions were made and show that input was implemented in negotiations.

Dana asked if the PIC would like quarterly updates for response to comment documents. The committee members agreed with the idea.

Reflections on Recent Meetings and Upcoming Meetings

Liz Mattson commented on a recent LERF decontamination public meeting. She felt that it was a particularly "rough" meeting and a good example of Miya Burke's round robin comments. It was particularly difficult to understand and took extensive questioning to make the topic understandable for

something that was ultimately very simple to explain. She did not expect that new or unfamiliar people were likely to follow or understand the meeting. She thought that those presenters were likely doing their best and following the rules that were set, but wanted to figure out ways to make those meetings more understandable and presentable.

Dan Solitz noted that DOE put out a request for information regarding potential sites for a deep geological repository. He stated that DOE might be making a mistake in not taking a more rigorous approach and hoped to follow the topic and comment. Jeff stated that might be a consideration for a future topic and hoped to talk with someone about DOE's approach.

Jeff offered observations for the WIR TBI meeting. It had DOE and NRC representatives present to talk about the process to evaluate if tank waste could be reclassified and disposed off-site. He thought it was nice that it was held in the Microsoft Teams environment, as that allowed him to see who else was participating and allowed for chat among the participants. He wondered if that was a result of the PIC's suggestions in that regard. He noted that it was shorter than many might have expected and wondered if it was a result of the meeting content being particularly well practiced over the course of many related public meetings. Previous meetings took several hours and involved a "parade" of subject matter experts discussing the technical content. He asked Gary Younger if there were any updates regarding in-person meetings for the HAB. Gary stated that there were not and that he hoped for that to change in the future, but it was conditions-based.

Public Involvement Opportunities for Significant Hanford Planning Documents

Jeff Burright introduced the initial topic for discussion: Review of response to HAB Advice #310

Tom Silica stated that, when he read the response, he was excited to learn of an upcoming TPA 5-Year Review, though based on an earlier discussion, he was no longer certain if that was accurate. If it was, he was looking forward to being engaged in it. Gary Younger confirmed that there was a TPA 5-Year Review that was in process, but he did not have any information beyond that.

Ruth Nicholson asked, for clarification, if the TPA 5-Year Review the same or different than the CERCLA 5-Year Review. Roberto Armijo confirmed that they were different.

Shelley Cimon asked about the process for the TPA 5-Year Review, specifically if there was a need or desire for the public to weigh in. Roberto stated that it was being done by DOE. Tom Sicilia noted that the CERCLA 5-Year Review had a draft release and comments on it were being sought. He asked if there was a comment process on the TPA 5-Year Review. Roberto was unsure and agreed to ask.

Jan Catrell, Washington League of Women Voters, asked if the review in question was a specified process or requirement within the TPA agreement, and further, if anyone was certain about which of the two 5-year reviews was being referenced. Jeff stated that was a good question that arose as a result of its mention in the response to advice and that it might provide an opportunity to talk about the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters*, which was added to the TPA. Jan stated that she looked forward to reviewing the review document.

Gerry Pollet expressed his disappointment that the response to advice did not seem to respond directly to the HAB's advice about a regional public involvement effort in planning. He felt that, from the response given, the TPA agencies were not committing to doing anything. He wanted to know of the TPA agencies were committing to public involvement on the TPA 5-Year Review. David Bowen stated that he was still learning and was unsure of the specific details of the TPA and CERCLA 5-Year Reviews individually. To his knowledge, the TPA 5-Year Review was just kicking off, but did not know specifically what the

public involvement process for it was. He agreed to work with others to see if a presentation on the subject could be assembled. Roberto stated that he just reached out on the subject of the TPA 5-Year Review and learned that there would be change control forms that go out for public comment, at some point. That was all he knew at the time. Gary also stated that he understood there to be a public comment component.

Tom Sicilia noted that a discussion of the CERCLA 5-Year Review was requested for the River and Plateau Committee (RAP) and hoped to get that scheduled. Gary stated that he was working on that and hoped for it to be ready in the spring.

Jeff recalled a request for presentation on the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters* to include what changes were made since the HAB's input on the topic approximately six years prior. He wanted to understand which of the two reviews might "open up" the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters*. He hoped for a presentation on the potential additions to the TPA to understand what was changed or what was being considered for change, to give the public an opportunity to weigh in on the process. Regarding the response to advice, he was disappointed as he felt that the HAB's specific request was clean, but not responded to.

Shelley wanted to understand the TPA 5-Year Review more clearly: was it an administrative review? She hoped to understand the scope of it to see if it was something that the HAB should weigh in on. David Bowen stated that he was looking into that.

Tom Galioto, referencing the last bullet, stated that the agencies regularly conducted workshops and visioning process-related activities and referenced 20-year-old advice. He did not agree that the activities were very regular and felt that the response was misleading.

Jeff wondered where to go from that point. He hoped for a future briefing on the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters* that included what happened with the document in the prior six years and how it affects the end-state of the Hanford Site. He wanted to understand where the HAB's comments on it could be helpful to the agencies.

Gary noted that the last bullet in the response to advice requested input on existing activities, stating that DOE was often told that its public meetings were not sufficient. He suggested that the PIC come up with some sort of template for public meetings, such that the HAB and DOE were working from the same definitions. DOE did not just want to be told that its work was not sufficient; it wanted a clear definition to work to. Jeff stated that that seemed like a fair request and would need to work with the related IM team towards making that a successful conversation.

Shelley stated that not everyone was unhappy with public involvement events and that the PIC should be careful not to assume such. She stated that HAB comments are important but should not be considered a sweeping decision or condemnation. For efforts in designing public meetings, she reminded the committee that not all Board products needed to be from the whole board and that discussions within a committee could be just as valuable, if not more so than advice, showing that diverse needs and viewpoints. Additionally, Shelley stated that should TPA agency presentations be prepared with ample lead time, tutorials could be assembled and distributed to help the public in providing more informed, constructive input that the TPA agencies ask for.

Tom Sicilia suggested putting together a PIC white paper on effective public involvement campaigns. Shelley agreed that it was a good idea, not noted that an "umbrella" idea might not fit every situation.

Ruth Nicholson noted that there was significant lag time in presentations due to the DOE review process. She asked about if the preparation time for public presentations were as long as those for the HAB. Gary stated that he was unsure but could ask. He noted that the process for his own team amounted to five to six weeks from concept to delivery of HAB presentations. Ryan stated that, from an Ecology standpoint, presentations could be turned around faster due to fewer levels of approval but was more dependent on workload and staff availability. HAB and public meeting presentations took approximately the same amount of time for Ecology. Jen Colborn, HMIS, stated that for DOE, public meetings took from four to six weeks, of which two to three weeks consisted of DOE Headquarters review and approval. Roberto stated that EPA's situation of similar to that of Ecology, being dependent on resource availability. He estimated four-to-six-week turnaround.

How can the public be meaningfully involved? How do you want to be involved?

Jeff asked if anyone had thoughts on the subject. He saw the topic as a connection to the HAB spring meeting; he wanted to educate on the what the big topics were and how public involvement would work for each.

Jacob Reynolds, Non-Union, Non-Management Employees, stated that, in the TWC and other places, people have expressed disappointment in being left out of TPA negotiations, which feel like policy priorities. The HAB is a group that is intended to give policy-level advice, he stated, and asked if PIC might be the right group to discuss that issue. Jeff stated that he understood, having both heard and experienced the eagerness to be involved in holistic negotiations.

Steve Wiegman stated that he expected many of the HAB members shared that frustration but did not want to spend time on something that was a result of legal restrictions. Jacob stated that he was skeptical about legal restrictions and wished for the TPA agencies to specify what part of those negotiations were being restricted. Steve Wiegman agreed, but stated that he did not expect they would, based on past experience.

Shelley recalled her previous experience as a member of the Tank Waste Task Force. She explained that, though TPA negotiations occurred behind closed doors, where negotiations stalled the representatives would consult with the task force before going back for further negotiations. She stated that the process was very successful, though it was a different time and situation, particularly in how many people wanted to participate and be a stakeholder. She suggested that members and agencies look back at the significance and positive outcome of the Tank Waste Task Force, as current negotiations were not looking to the public for solutions.

Gerry thanked Shelley for that point, stating that he felt history was important. He stated that the holistic negotiations presently underway had parallels to the Tank Consent Decree negotiations, which resulted in something that met stakeholder priorities. He felt that the TPA agencies' current choice of negotiating in secret was a matter of choice, not legal requirement. Jeff noted that, in looking at previous recommendation letters from the State of Oregon, he saw references to the Tank Waste Task Force and its results as justification for consulting with the Board.

Shelley noted that in the Spring the Hanford Site would begin with System Plan 10, which was a topic to be considered going forward. Jeff stated that, for those new to the HAB or the topic, the system plans were models of how tank waste treatment systems would work; how to get waste out, across the site, etc. The model would be used to "ask questions" of the system and to continually improve the design. He stated that it had been fodder for the many discoveries about the tank waste mission, though many times it was learned that the mission would be more difficult than initially anticipated.

Open Forum

Jeff explained that, over the break between topics, he reviewed a contribution from Roberto Armijo, a table of topics discussed for the TPA 5-Year Review in a recent set of Inter-Agency Management Integration Team Meeting Minutes. Particularly, a note within that showed that the *Central Plateau Inner Areas Cleanup Principles and Parameters* was subject to the public involvement process. He stated that, with that knowledge, he expected that the HAB would get the public opportunity that it asked for and was then satisfied with the Response to HAB Advice #310.

Jeff introduced two related open forum topics:

- What would make it easier for me to engage as a new/returning HAB member?
- What is an optimal meeting design post-COVID? (Starting the conversation)

Roberto noted that he had an upcoming meeting with EPA's environmental justice staff. If there was any information that PIC members wanted him to bring back from that meeting, he requested that they reach out by phone or email.

Steve Anderson stated that one thing he would appreciate and would make engagement easier would be links to supporting documentation on topics to be discussed. Those would allow members to become better informed and develop better conversation points. He stated that he particularly appreciated it when documentation was provided for multiple viewpoints. He felt that allowed members to be better informed while respecting their time, instead of expecting them to research on their own and potentially get lost in Hanford.gov, as many members did not know how to effectively seek such information.

Emmitt Jackson noted that there had been a lot of previous discussion within the PIC on environmental justice. He wondered what the HAB's perspective was of that topic or what environmental justice meant to the HAB. Roberto stated that, to EPA, when narrowing down that scope for Hanford, it was a matter of ensuring that cleanup was performed equitably, with respect to minority communities. However, he stated that there was not a defined community with environmental justice concerns within the scope of Hanford at the time, though that determination was not "set in stone" and could be changed. Jeff contributed, stating that the PIC and the Board had not yet defined that viewpoint and had been seeking information in general to figure out how to hold those conversations in the future. Dan Solitz noted that intergenerational equity might be an aspect to consider in environmental justice, stating that those who get the benefits of the project pass on the costs.

Gerry Pollet stated that a fundamental aspect of environmental justice in regard to Hanford Site cleanup was understanding, respecting, and incorporating potential increased exposure and hardship to communities, which included tribal communities whose resources were affected by cleanup decisions. He felt that the Board did not have the grounding for understanding or learning those aspects. As such, he felt that each meeting should begin with a land acknowledgement to begin that "journey of understanding." He stated that, in the present era, it meant a lot to have a land acknowledgement, especially when making decisions that related specifically to ceded lands or lands directly affecting those groups.

Jan Catrell stated that she attended a lot of public meetings that do have such acknowledgements and felt that they were a worthy activity. Shelley Cimon felt that the Board would need to arrive at that conclusion as a group and would need discussions and education sessions from tribes or other interested entities to explore and better understand what it meant. Tom Sicilia stated that he liked the idea but thought it would be tricky with virtual meetings.

In relation to the second open forum topic, Tom Sicilia noted the challenge of location scouting with adequate internet capabilities and space for post-COVID HAB meetings. He saw potential for meeting in person in March of 2022. He noted that cancellation was always an option but finding a suitable location on short notice would not be possible. Jeff suggested high school cafeterias, and Tom Sicilia suggested similar locations at Washington State University or Columbia Basin College, which might have potential to attract young members of the public to meetings.

Ruth Nicholson noted other aspects to consider beyond physical space requirements would be components of a remote and in-person hybrid meeting setup. Jeff stated that through how someone remote might be able to see everyone's face and that potential solutions might increase the technology burden of meeting setup. He wondered if everyone would need a computer. Ruth agreed, worrying that not everyone would likely have a laptop available. Jeff noted that most smartphones would also be suitable for that purpose but would require people to dedicate their phone to that purpose.

Jan noted that there had been a call-in option for HAB meetings for a long time that did not account for people's faces. She felt that the HAB could do better than that, but it was not a necessity. She hoped that were in-person meetings a possibility that people would make the effort to attend and expected that meetings would be better as a result, as many members and attendants already did not show their faces in the remote environment.

Ruth noted that the pace of online meetings tended to be slower than in-person meetings, as a matter of necessity, and expected that hybrid meetings might go even slower due to the facilitator's need to keep track of even more aspects. She wondered how that might affect the HAB's meeting experience and at what point the meeting pace would become a challenge.

Jan stated that the emphasis should be on presentations, rather than trying to do free-form discussion. She presented the idea of breakout rooms, which would have a leader and speakers controlling a smaller group.

Liz Mattson stated that it would likely be known in advance as to which members would be attending in-person versus virtually. In her past experience with such meetings, the burden was on those attending virtually to get attention, as the meetings prioritized those in the room. She felt that that could be overcome, however. She thought that the biggest challenge would be a small in-person turnout with a primarily remote attendance.

Tom Sicilia stated that he thought that event if a meeting had a slower pace, it would be worthwhile due to hallway conversations.

Shelley stated that she liked the idea of designing a meeting, then determining the equipment to fit the need. The goal of the meeting should be considered in its construction and design. She expected that whatever was chosen, the group would get used to it.

Ginger Wireman, Ecology, noted that the HAB could implement other tools such as a "jam board," which would allow asynchronous collaboration. She thought such a tool might be valuable for time concerns, while also potentially introducing an element of playfulness and help members get to know each other better. She also suggested adding icebreakers. Ruth asked what people thought of icebreakers. Tom Sicilia stated that it depended on how many people were present. Ginger thought that icebreakers might be considered frivolous, but they served as a mental break that encouraged sharing of ideas. Tom Sicilia suggested having Microsoft Teams chat prompts for people to engage in during breaks.

Liz stated that she liked the idea of creating a space for people to get to know each other. She considered the idea of having an hour-long session the week before a board meeting for that purpose. She noted that she did an informal introduction for some of the HAB members and answered some of their questions. Those members were interested in the idea of having some casual space for conversations as getting things through the Board formally was difficult. Ruth noted that there was a full HAB Teams channel for that could serve that purpose. Liz stated that she was willing to do something that could get new people engaged in a way that makes them want to participate; she was willing to do the work, but it needed to be a Board decision.

Jeff asked if there were any other thoughts on making it easier for members to engage or if there were other topics members wished to explore.

Emmitt stated that something he felt was missing, from his perspective, was Native American input. He understood that those groups had government-to-government communications, but the HAB did not typically receive feedback or results from those. He wanted to understand if the HAB's concerns and discussions meshed with those. Gary stated that, by his recollection, those discussions were not something that were made public at the request of the tribes. He offered to see if he could permission to share some aspects of those discussions if there were specific topics of interest, however. Roberto also offered to ask around and see what might be available.

HAB Member Self-Assessments

Jeff Burright stated that he spoke to some individuals at events such as birthday parties about Hanford. Though he expected those individuals would have been bored with the topic, they were instead very interested.

Ruth Nicholson noted that some people at the dance studio she visited were surprised to learn that Hanford was in Washington.

Liz Mattson stated that her organization, Hanford Challenge, recently hired Miya Burke as Program Manager and as helping her with comment guides and workshops. She stated that she has done multiple in-person events on Hanford topics. Her organization did some "tabling," with booths at events such as the Pasco Flea Market. In that particular event, they talked to approximately 50 people, only two of which knew about Hanford.

Jan noted that a trend that had recently captured public attention of the idea of transferring away from carbon-producing energy sources, which had given rise to interest in new nuclear reactors. Some had reservations about the idea of nuclear energy; she thought that might be an educational topic that could be transitioned into discussions about Hanford.

Tom Sicilia stated that there was an upcoming Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board meeting in January 2022, though with travel challenges that time of year and the Omicron COVID-19 variant's prevalence, he expected it to be another virtual meeting. He would be giving a presentation on the geology of Hanford at that meeting.

Emmitt Jackson stated that he has family over for Thanksgiving and attended a concert where he discussed Hanford and its history. He had a great time with each.

Gerry Pollet stated that Heart of America Northwest had a tabling event at a Tacoma Dome concert, which had a big display and a citizen's guide on the Hanford 5-Year Plan. They also held events at high schools in Pasco and Mattawa. In Pasco, he was surprised to learn that a great deal of students did not know about Hanford. He stated that few students understood how racism was reflected in the

development of the Tri-Cities and Hanford. He felt those high school interactions were very interesting, and noted that for one of the high schools, the TPA agencies had a series of presentations as well.

Ryan Miller stated that Ecology would be holding a “Let’s Talk About Hanford” event that covered the events of the last year, which would, as always, include a question-and-answer session where the audience could ask about the Hanford Site topics or Ecology’s related work.

Committee Business

Ruth Nicholson stated that the next committee week was scheduled for February 7th through the 10th of 2022. Jeff asked that any members with conflicts to state such. Roberto Armijo noted that EPA would be unavailable for part of the 7th, from 11:00AM to noon.

It was also noted that committee elections would be occurring in February and requested that interested members put forth their names or nominations.

On the subject of topics for the next PIC meeting, Gerry Pollet suggested that an introduction to land acknowledgements be considered.

Emmitt Jackson suggested that an environmental justice topic be discussed.

Liz Mattson asked if the response to comment document updates could be a presentation, as discussed in the TPA Public Involvement Calendar topic. Additionally, if there was more information available on the TPA 5-Year Review, there would be potential for discussion on both the *Central Plateau Inner Area Cleanup Principles and Parameters* as well as Hanford site end-states.

Ryan Miller stated that were an environmental justice topic chosen with enough lead time, Ecology could potentially provide some information. It was noted that there was an environmental justice IM team created during a previous meeting, and several members requested to be added. The membership for the IM team at that point consisted of: Jeff Burright, Liz Mattson, Emmitt Jackson, Steve Anderson, and Dan Solitz.

Jeff suggested blending the topic of the TPA 5-Year Review with the public involvement and response to comment reviews. On a related topic, he suggested that links to the response to comment documents be provided ahead of the PIC meeting so members could review them. Additionally, he noted that there was a previously discussed topic of HAB membership recruitment that had not yet been explored.

Tom Sicilia asked if there were any “101” topics or presentations that might be beneficial to new members. Jeff stated that, should any new members have requests, to put forth ideas of things that might be useful.

Gary Younger noted that the March HAB meeting was intended to be mostly a “Hanford 101” throughout.

Ginger Wireman noted that there used to be a Hanford trivia game that might be worth finding and posting. She noted that DOE had some good presentations available that might be worth collecting for HAB members to watch, should they be interested. Emmitt stated that there was a video on the Waste Treatment Plant that would be worth including for that purpose.

With no further topics, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Recording

<https://youtu.be/xYWWGNRkCfY>

Attachments

[Attachment 1: Meeting Agenda](#)

[Attachment 2: Draft Meeting Minutes for PIC May Meeting](#)

[Attachment 3: Draft Meeting Minutes for PIC September Meeting](#)

[Attachment 4: TPA Agency Response to HAB Advice #310](#)

Attendees

Board Members and Alternates:

Dan Solitz, Primary	Emmitt Jackson, Primary	Esteban Ortiz, Primary
Gerry Pollet, Primary	Jacob Reynolds, Primary	Jan Catrell, Primary
Shelley Cimon, Primary	Steve Anderson, Primary	Steve Wiegman, Primary
Tom Galioto, Primary	Dan Strom, Alternate	Dana Miller, Alternate
Erin Braich, Alternate	Jeff Burright, Alternate	Liz Mattson, Alternate
Simone Anter, Alternate	Tom Sicilia, Alternate	

Others:

Cameron Hardy, DOE	David Bowen, Ecology	Abigail Zilar, GSSC for DOE
Gary Younger, DOE	Daina McFadden, Ecology	Dieter Bohrmann, CPCCo
Stan Branch, DOE	Ginger Wireman, Ecology	Cerise Peck, HMIS
	Ryan Miller, Ecology	Coleen Drinkard, HMIS
	Roberto Armijo, EPA	Dana Cowley, HMIS
	Earl Fordham, Washington Department of Health	Gabriel Bohnee, HMIS
		Jennifer Colborn, HMIS
		Patrick Conrad, HMIS
		Miya Burke, Hanford Challenge
		KB
		Joshua Patnaude, HAB Facilitation
		Olivia Wilcox, HAB Facilitation
		Ruth Nicholson, HAB Facilitation

Note: Participants for this virtual meeting were asked to sign in with their name and affiliation in the chat box of Microsoft Teams. Not all attendees shared this information. The attendance list reflects what information was collected at the meeting.